

United States Government,

It is the intent of the USG, reaffirmed on many occasions,

1. ~~As President Johnson has stated on many occasions,~~ the US intends to do what is necessary to help ~~SVN~~ ^{South Vietnam} preserve its independence.

I have just returned from a trip to SVN, with Ambassador Lodge and General Wheeler, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to help us determine what is now necessary. It was our purpose to review the force levels planned for SVN, the number of US troops to be assigned there, the equipment required, the expected consumption of munitions and other products. We had the opportunity for full discussions with Ambassador Taylor, with General Westmoreland and other senior US Commanders, and with Premier Ky and members of the GVN, all of whom gave us their latest appreciation of the requirements for moving toward our mutual objectives in SVN. ~~We discussed our recommendations to the President~~ As the President has now told the Nation, we are taking certain actions based on our conclusions during this visit, which also represent the judgment of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Our discussions confirmed, in considerably more detail, the situation as I described it for the press just before leaving: that the Viet Cong have continued to increase their forces in South Viet Nam, importantly through continued infiltration of troops, leadership, and now, regular North Vietnamese combat units; that the level and intensity of operation during the summer has increased, as we predicted it would; and that we can expect further increases in Viet Cong operations because of the likely commitment of forces not yet committed to combat. As the President had already stated, we left for SVN with the knowledge that our findings might well show an increased American response on the ground in SVN to be necessary; which, in turn, would require steps to insure that our reserves of men and equipment in the US remained adequate for any and all emergencies. We returned with these convictions.

should also by
~~which represent also the judgment of~~ ~~the~~ Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Westmoreland and other senior U.S. Commanders, *that these steps were indeed urgently required.*

We shall be adding, in the next few months, combat and support troops totalling about 100,000 to these already within SVN. Our forces ^{then} will defend their own bases; they will assist in providing security in neighboring areas; and they will be available for more active combat missions when the Vietnamese Government and General Westmoreland agree that such active missions are needed, as they surely will be. To offset these additional deployments ^{and} ~~to~~ reconstitute the central reserve, we shall be calling up some reserve units, increasing our draft calls and extending some tours of duty. ^{PP} At this time, when we are calling for ^{burdens} new ~~efforts~~ and sacrifices from the families and young men of this country, it is right that we should spell out once again why it is that these efforts are *as needed.* ~~being asked.~~ What is the nature of the conflict in which we are participating in SVN, and what are the stakes in that conflict for the people of the United States and the free world? ~~Exclusively~~ I can best address these broad ^{issues,} ~~questions,~~ *by focusing some questions* which ~~must~~ concern us all, *in* by way of ~~some~~ questions focussed upon the role of the young men who are being called ~~to serve their country~~ upon to hazard their lives in the service of their country. ^{PP} Why are they needed ~~to fight in~~ Vietnam, at this time? Who are the people they are fighting ^{to protect,} ~~for,~~ in that country, and who are they fighting against? Finally, what are they fighting for, ~~both in~~ *Southeast Asia* locally and in terms of the broader interests of the United States?

First: the need for urgent deployment of additional US troops. ~~Exclusively~~
It has become clear, in the last two months, that neither our earlier evidences of our commitment to the defense of SVN, nor our repeated offers of unconditional discussions, have persuaded the Government of North Vietnam to abandon ^{to} their attempt to win ~~control of the people of South Vietnam by achieving a military victory~~ ^{the} ~~control~~ of the people of South Vietnam by ~~a~~ military victory *of the Viet Cong forces.* *Communist-led*

3.

On the contrary, the ~~Hanoi-directed~~ Viet Cong, ^{directed and supported by Hanoi,} have quickened the pace of their terrorism and military attacks. ~~They expect~~ They evidently hope to crack, this summer, the major obstacle to their success: the as-yet-unbroken morale of the armed forces of South Vietnam and of the people they defend, the majority of the population who are hostile to a Viet Cong victory. ^{The summer offensive} Their strategy appears to be to overwhelm ~~outmanned~~ isolated ^{of the Viet Cong} army units, outposts and relief columns and to overrun lightly defended district towns. ~~xx~~ In order to inflict 2000 killed upon the SVN armed forces in the months of May and June, the Viet Cong have been willing to commit previously unused ^{some in regional strength} main force units, and to accept ^{themselves away this own} over 5000 ~~dead~~ ^{Troops} dead at the hands of the ^{defenders} defending troops and American air support.

At the same time, their terrorism has taken on increasingly large scale.

~~In the Central Highlands of Vietnam,~~ They have begun to burn ~~down~~ entire villages and to kidnap the entire population of others; in recent months, over ³⁷⁵ 350,000 refugees have fled from their depredations.

The 65,000 main force troops and 80-100,000 ^{part-time} guerrillas of the Viet Cong are numerically inferior to the ^{regular, paramilitary and police} overall strength of the forces of the South Vietnamese government, ^{by 3 or 4 to 1,} including ~~into that comparison is included~~ ^{which make together some 500,000.}

~~The main force strength represents a best estimate of combat units~~
^{Why, then, are more troops — and US troops — needed to deal with the Viet Cong}
~~But does it is in terms of the equipment. But that factor of~~
^{challenge?} ^{If a first consideration is that numerical}

3 or 4 to 1, low as it is in terms of the requirements of combatting guerrilla operations, understates the ^{relative strength of the} offensive threat of the Viet Cong, ^{in rural} areas. The Viet Cong main force combat units in South Vietnam are the offensive

cutting edge of an army whose logistic and command tail lies largely ^{at least} in the North. The training facilities for the 45,000 infiltrators — 6000 this year —

^{across the border in North Vietnam.}

who form ^{have} the leadership, the technical specialists and the hard core of the main force units; ^{are in the North.} The supply depots, ~~from which flow the latest Chinese Communist arms with which the main force units are now almost entirely equipped.~~ ^{central} The command ~~center~~ and communications centers, where the ~~main~~ planning and staffwork is performed and ~~the~~ high-level ~~main~~ management ^{originates; these too are in the North.} ~~emanates: all of these are located across the border in North Vietnam,~~ ^{all of these are} manned by officers, ^{and trainers} and troops that are not found in the ~~65,000-man figure~~ ^{combat strength of the} figures for Viet Cong combat strength. ^{When all} ^{the corresponding personnel} these functions are subtracted from the 250,000-man total of the South Vietnamese regular armed forces, ^{but above the troops tied down manning and defending bases and} what remains is by no means a 4 to 1 superiority in combat strength; ^{population centers} in many areas, the confrontation of deployed combat battalions, ^{on both sides} is now on even terms. ~~Moreover~~ That is not ~~good~~ enough, ^{even after the loss of} Nor can the best efforts of the GVN ~~manage~~ to recruit and train new troops expand its forces fast enough to meet its needs, in the face of ^{continued infiltration and the} this summer offensive. ^{monsoon} ^{It Nor will the need for much larger troops} ^{diminish after the summer offensive has been blocked.} Tied down by its defensive responsibilities to guard population centers ^{Facing Viet Cong forces of the current size and organization,} and major facilities, the government forces lack adequate mobile reserves. Without these, they ^{must respond too slowly or not} cannot respond quickly or at all to attacks on outlying villages and outposts, or else they may have to respond with relief forces that are themselves liable to be outmanned by a Viet Cong ambush. ^{Moreover,} They lack ^{these} adequate ^{offensive} forces to seek out and destroy, ^{throughout the countryside,} an elusive enemy who has no responsibility to defend territory or people and can choose to evade battle. ~~Stretched thin by carrying these varied tasks, the government forces can do~~ ^{expelled} ~~forced to relinquish first class of themselves to relinquish~~ Yet to let a Viet Cong unit persist unchallenged in ^{any} a region is to let it grow, by taxes and ^{governmental} drafts levied on the local people, and to sacrifice ^{authority} in the eyes of these people by failing to provide them security.

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~~That~~ This summer South Vietnam is in crisis. That Hanoi is gambling for decisive results in this monsoon season is shown by the intensified Viet Cong operations; ^{by} their willingness to commit ~~previous~~ ^{in large-scale attacks} previously unused regular units and to accept heavy casualties. It is shown in the testimony of defectors and captured ~~the~~ plans. It is shown by the increased infiltration and by the increasingly flagrant character and commitment in SVN of the North Vietnamese intervention, capped by the deployment of regular regiments of the ~~North~~ Peoples' Army of North Vietnam.

The prize at stake in this summer offensive is, in part, the control of rural territory. But even more, it is psychological. The prize to be ^{or lost} gained ^{in this campaign} by ~~the~~ one side or the other--so strongly have expectations been focussed on its outcome--is ^{belief} ~~the~~ confidence in ultimate victory. ^{itself} And that prize can be decisive. ^{HP (the Viet Cong gambling for this stake in a war that has gone on advantage for a very long time)} With this as the goal of the expanded Viet Cong forces, the fighting will be bitter. The deficiencies ~~of~~ ^{general} of the government forces--in defensive forces, in reserves, in forces for offensive action--in the face of this strong drive must be made up quickly; ^{for many months ahead only} and they can ~~only~~ be made up by ~~from~~ forces from outside, principally from the United States. ~~Moreover~~ It is the purpose of our new deployments to meet these needs, which will extend well beyond this fall.

The apparent victor, if there is one, of the summer monsoon campaign may well gather the confidence and support essential to a successful resolution.

None of our objectives in South Vietnam can be gained if ~~the~~ government forces, with all the help we can provide, do not blunt and bloody the monsoon offensive, and then follow up that success, to the point of persuading ~~the~~ the Viet Cong leaders in Hanoi that they cannot win in the South.

*our opponents
as the Communists claim and
may others sincerely believe*

The next question is: Who will our troops be fighting to defend in South Vietnam, and who will they be fighting against? This question bears on the political character of the conflict in South Vietnam. Should we ~~infer~~ ^{infer}—as some have done—from the strength of the Viet Cong as I have described it that it benefits from the sympathy and support of the greater part of the population of South Vietnam? ^{Should we conclude} that North Vietnam is supporting the popular side in a civil war, while we are intervening to block the desires of the majority? The answer is No on all counts. ~~But these~~ If it were otherwise, our past and present commitments would be meaningless, nor could the Government of the United States ask of the American ~~public~~ people their ~~its~~ support and/sacrifice.

One fact is fundamental: the great majority of the people of South Vietnam do not want the Viet Cong to win. ^{They} They would like the war to be over: ^{They would like social, political and economic change; but they do not} but not at the price of a Viet Cong victory. ^{want to live in a Communist state.} They would like to see their country united: but not ~~under the~~ ^{war,} by force, and not under the domination of the Communist regime of North Vietnam, ~~or any facsimile.~~

In these matters--if in little else--the leaders and the ~~bulk of the~~ ^{members of every major} ~~that comprise the majority of~~ ^{South Vietnamese population are united:} Buddhists and Catholics, unions and businessmen, armed forces, ^{and} civil servants, students, ^{and} religious sects. These groups, and especially their leadership, know ~~all~~ well that a Viet Cong victory would mean a Communist state in South Vietnam: ~~initially modelled on~~ ^{initially modelled on}, eventually ~~dominated by~~ the Communist regime in North Vietnam. They know well what that would mean for their fate. Very many of these people would fight ~~only~~ to prevent that, even against hopeless odds, if the outside help vital to their cause were withdrawn. They would be fighting for their freedom; and many of them would be fighting for their lives.

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Indeed, in many cases their lives would be at stake precisely because they had ~~believed in and~~ acted on ^{faith in} the repeated pledges of continued United States support.

Many of these same leaders have been, at any given time, critical of the current government: some to the point of imprisonment, or banishment, or self-imposed exile or obscurity. Yet not one figure of public or ~~political prominence/has joined the Viet Cong, or its political voice~~ ^{inside or outside any national government since 1954} within South Vietnam, the National Liberation Front. No leader of a major ^{national} group, no member of any/government, ~~since 1954~~ has urged an end to the war on terms that would accept domination by the ~~Viet Cong or the~~ National Liberation Front or its master, the Communist North Vietnamese regime.

In sum, our forces will be fighting to defend, in South Vietnam, the non-Communist majority of the population who ~~are~~ have resisted for the terrorism many years ~~the numerous the efforts~~ and appeals of an ~~armed~~ insurgent minority, armed, led and directed from North Vietnam, whose success would impose a Communist dictatorship upon the South. Our ^{troops} ~~forces~~ will be fighting alongside the Armed Forces of the Republic of Vietnam, who have been fighting on for six years despite a casualty rate far higher than we have ^{ever} suffered in our history.

Who, then, are the Viet Cong, that ~~our~~ troops will be fighting? They are, to begin with, a minority in South Vietnam. ~~They are~~ Among the 14 million people of South Vietnam, they are a very tiny minority ~~in numbers~~ ^{guerrilla troops} if we look at the armed ~~main force and irregular troops~~ ^{irregular troops} alone, some 160,000 in all. ^{Their strength is} They are probably not much larger when their active political sympathizers are included. And they remain a small minority--under a quarter of the population--^{even if} ~~when one counts in all these rural inhabitants~~ ~~members of the rural population who submit to~~ by virtue of terrorism, ^{of Viet Cong units} ~~the~~ military presence, or habit--to the administrative control of Viet Cong leaders.

James, J.

The ~~concept~~ of notion of population "controlled" by the Viet Cong ~~can be~~
~~however that is~~ ^{can be} a useful ~~gauge~~ ^{current} gauge of their success; but
(is indeed)
it is a very inflated measure of their active popular support, or even of
passive sympathy. To assume that ~~Communist success in~~ the success of
Communist guerrillas in extending some form of control in rural areas
indicates widespread allegiance to their cause is to ~~miss the basic tactics~~
by the current rulers in
~~of the~~ mistake the very basis of the approach developed/in Peking and Hanoi.
In particular, it is to miss the function and scale of terrorism in that approach.

In South Vietnam the Viet Cong have never been able to rely upon
broad and deep nationalistic or ideological appeal; but the Communist
techniques of rural insurgency are designed to operate, where necessary,
without such an appeal. Nor is disaffection from the central government
essential, though ~~it has rarely been lacking~~ that is no harder to find
in rural areas of South Vietnam than in many other agricultural societies.

This bleeding and intimidation of the governmental structure in South Vietnam~~xx~~ has gone on for eight years; and it goes on today, brutal and selective as ever. In the first six months of this year, the Viet Cong murdered _____ civic officials and kidnapped _____. ^{What has} ~~What has~~ ~~been added~~ ~~xxxx~~ ~~in recent months~~ ~~is the burning~~ ~~and~~ ~~or kidnapping of~~ ~~/, as mentioned earlier,~~ ~~entire villages, a rampage that has led to the flight of hundreds of~~ ~~thousands of refugees. Statistics like these are hard to comprehend in familiar~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ ~~terms; yet the 11,000 civilians~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ ~~assassinated or kidnapped in~~ ~~1964 would correspond in terms of United States population to more than~~ ~~Vietnamese~~ ~~100,000, the 1500/civic officials to more than 15,000 US mayors and~~ ~~councilman.~~

Such figures expose starkly the true meaning of "population control" by the Communist guerrillas. To provide information and taxes and sons to the Viet Cong in regions they infest requires no basic sympathy for the guerrillas, no ideological allegiance, no hatred for the central government. It requires no more than a decent respect for one's skin.

The rank-and-file soldiers
~~They~~ are not, for the most part, Communists: even in the main force units. They are, except for the more recent infiltrators and PAVN units, mostly South Vietnamese. ^{in origin.} Their military leaders, ^{from high to low,} are ~~highly disciplined~~ ^{highly disciplined} to subject to the discipline of the Peoples' Army of Vietnam; and, an extent of which the rank and file may be scarcely aware, they are controlled by the ^{High Command} ~~military headquarters~~ of the Peoples' Army in ^{Hanoi.} ~~North Vietnam~~. Likewise, the National Liberation Front, which, like all "popular fronts," includes ~~non-Communists~~, is dominated by the Peoples' Revolutionary Party, the Communist Party of South Vietnam, which is wholly under the party discipline of the Lao Dong Party in the North.

^{Thus,} In short, the well-trained and hard-fighting troops of the Viet Cong ^{will-led} fall into several categories. ^{both} ~~include~~ ^{include} large numbers of ~~political~~ ^{well-led} who were simply "drafted" or coerced into service, ^{they include} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~or recruited on varying personal grounds~~ ^{and} ~~most of whom can and~~ ^{and} must someday be reintegrated into the national life of an independent South Vietnam. ^{among the officers and commissars,} And they include ~~disciplined North Vietnamese officers and hardened Communists who could never~~ ^{disciplined North Vietnamese officers and hardened Communists who could never} play any role in an independent, non-Communist South Vietnam but that of dedicated and dangerous conspirators.

Meanwhile, ^{troops - not only the Northern drafters or the} ~~all of these~~ ^{all of these} ~~disciplined~~ ^{disciplined} ~~troops, who are fully conscious of it, are~~ ^{troops, who are fully conscious of it, are} ~~serving within the boundaries of South Vietnam as the armed forces~~ ^{serving within the boundaries of South Vietnam as the armed forces} ~~not all of whom are conscious of it,~~ ^{not all of whom are conscious of it,} or political agents of an external power. ~~It is their purpose~~ ^{It is their purpose} to overthrow the government of South Vietnam by armed force, terrorism and subversion. They are engaged in aggression.

^{They include, among their officers, NCOs and hard-core troops,}
^{large numbers of disciplined, experienced guerrilla fighters who fought}
^{in the South}
^{the South with the Viet Minh; before 1954, who obeyed Hanoi orders}
^{to move North in 1954 and serve in the People's Army or on}
^{state farms; and who obeyed orders in 1959 or later to return South to fight}
^{once more, in infiltration units via the trails in Laos.}

*Insert below:
However,*

In building up the Viet Cong forces for a decisive challenge, the authorities in North Vietnam have increasingly dropped the disguises that gave their earlier support a clandestine character. ~~Through~~ ^{Through} ~~which even then~~ ^{furnished} 1963, the bulk of the arms infiltrated from the North--which even then ~~was~~ ^{old} the majority of main force weapons--were French and American models acquired in Indochina and Korea. ^{from North Vietnam} prior to 1954. Now the weapons flow consists almost entirely of the latest ~~family of~~ arms acquired from Communist China; and the flow is large enough to have ~~by now~~ entirely reequipped the main force units, despite ~~the~~ ^{this year} the capture of thousands of these weapons and millions of rounds of ~~the new~~ ^{by government forces} ammunition. ~~Through~~ ^{Through} 1963, nearly all the personnel infiltrating through Laos, trained and equipped ~~and ordered South by the Hanoi authorities~~ ^{in the North and ordered South,} were former Southerners. ~~who had obeyed earlier orders from the Hanoi authorities to come North in 1954.~~ ^{But} In the last eighteen months, the great majority of the infiltrators--more than 10,000 of them--have been ethnic Northerners, mostly ~~young~~ draftees ordered into the Peoples' Army of Viet Nam for duty in the South. And it is now certain that, starting their journey through Laos last December, from one to three regiments of a North Vietnamese regular division, the 325th Division of the Peoples' Army of Viet Nam have deployed ^{into} in the Central Highlands of South Vietnam for combat alongside the Viet Cong.

^{The fact is} It is true that Hanoi has long admitted, even boasted, of its support and direction of the insurgency in South Vietnam. As early as 1960, at the Third Congress of the ~~the~~ Lao Dong Party, the Communist party ~~of~~ that controls North Vietnam, both Ho Chi Minh and Vo Nguyen Giap, the commander-in-chief of the North Vietnamese armed forces, spoke of the need to "step up the national democratic people's revolution in the South." In ~~196~~ ¹⁹⁶ March 1963 the party organ Hoc Tap stated that the authorities in South Vietnam "are well aware that North Vietnam is the firm base for the southern

revolution and the point on which it leans, and that our party is the steady and experienced vanguard unit of the working class and people and is the brain and factor that decides all victories of the revolution." ^P Yet through

most felt these years the North Vietnamese government ~~definitely~~ denied and went to great efforts to conceal ^{the} ~~that~~ scale of ^{its} personnel and materiel support, in addition to direction and encouragement, to the Viet Cong. It had strong reasons to do so. ^P First of all, in 1954 the authorities in Hanoi had pledged to "respect the territory under the military control of the other party"--South Vietnam--"and engage in no hostile act against the other party." In 1962 these same authorities pledged that they would "not use the territory of the kingdom of Laos for interference in the internal affairs of other countries." ~~Unilaterally, through~~ ^{regime} ~~the~~ ^{world, including the} North Vietnamese had no wish to force upon the attention of the ~~other~~ ^{world} ~~parties to these agreements, which included the Soviet Union, its~~ massive and persistent violations of these pledges. Nor was it anxious for its ^{own} citizens to dwell upon the ultimate risks of ^{committing, unequivocally,} ~~pursuing~~ aggression across international boundaries. ~~Nor, finally,~~ ^{in South Vietnam} Nor could it ~~do anything~~ ^{be anything but harmed for it} but ~~harm~~ to the Viet Cong cause ~~in South Vietnam~~ to be recognized openly ^{With all these reasons for secrecy} as an instrument of the North Vietnamese regime. /The newly flagrant ~~new~~ character of the stepped-up North Vietnamese intervention in South Vietnam is further evidence--along with the intensified operations--that Hanoi is gambling for decisive results this summer.

in the South

Thus ^{its} Despite all these reasons for secrecy, Hanoi's desire for decisive results this summer has led it to measures of intervention that have at last ^{aggression} ~~become~~ ^{have grown increasingly} blatant. ^{aggression} ~~blatant~~ ^{blatant}

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The final question: In resisting this particular aggression, what interests of the United States will our forces be fighting to uphold?

But aggression by North Vietnam ~~against the independent states in~~
~~the South~~ did not begin just with the sending of uniformed regular units
across international borders. It began much earlier, though it did not
take, and still has not fully taken, the classic form of overt invasion.
What is new and different in Vietnam is that techniques of rebellion--
Communist leaders
including some that the ~~leadership~~ in Peking claim to have invented--have
been harnessed by a neighbor set on conquest. We are witnessing a form
of concealed aggression that is applicable, Peking ~~it~~ proclaims, to
emergent nations throughout the world.

Is it a form of aggression that can be called back? There are those
who ask whether Hanoi can, at this late date, reverse the ~~process~~ violent
process it launched in the South. The fact is that the Hanoi leadership
could do a great many things--things that are unquestionably within their
~~power~~ power--that could make all the difference in South Vietnam.
They could ^{do} many of them tomorrow.

--They could order back to their borders the regular units of the
People's Army of Vietnam now deployed in the Central Highlands.

Chinese Communist
--They could stop sending/weapons by the thousands and ammunition
by the ten into South Vietnam, by porters and junks and ships.

--They could stop sending, by a variety of means, detailed guidance
and commands to the Viet Cong units.

--They could stop sending tens of thousands of leadership cadre,
radiomen, weapons technicians, political specialists and ordinary draftees
into the South; and they could call back the ones they have sent.

--They could disband their dozen or so training camps in North Vietnam
where they train infiltrators in guerrilla tactics and techniques of
terrorism, assassination and sabotage; and their elaborate infiltration

network, with its thousands of guides and ~~posters~~ transport workers and dozens of ~~static~~ way-stations in Laos and South Vietnam.

Without the critical ~~flows of supplies and flows from Hanoi of direction~~ and direction, supplies, organization, ~~education~~ leadership, manpower ~~and exhortation~~ that have come from Hanoi in the past, remnants of rebellious insurgency might well remain in South Vietnam; but they could and would be contained ~~by the~~ without major outside assistance.

Could Hanoi be persuaded to curtail its activities? Not so long, we are sure, as the North Vietnamese leaders continue to believe that they are on the verge of bringing a total victory. Even though our air operations ~~in~~ in North Vietnam have made these activities more difficult and costly and have posed larger risks, we do not believe ~~these~~ the leadership in Hanoi--still less, their backers pushing them from Peking--will give up readily the hopes they have pinned on the Viet Cong buildup and offensive. That is why we ~~cannot~~ must not fail to crush these hopes. Only then, perhaps, will our repeated offers of unconditional discussions ~~in~~ of measures to ensure the independence of South Vietnam ~~meet~~ meet an interested response.

That raises my final question: What are the stakes at issue for the United States--stakes that justify the sending of American troops in large number--in this struggle to preserve the independence of South Vietnam?

A simple answer would be ~~far from complete~~ incomplete.